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Met Police Launch Probe Into London Acid Attack

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The Metropolitan Police have launched a major investigation after a 23-year-old woman suffered serious facial burns in a suspected acid attack in East London during the early hours of Tuesday morning. The incident, which has shocked the local community, has reignited debate over the availability of corrosive substances and the need for tougher laws to prevent similar crimes.

According to police reports, the victim was assaulted outside a residential block in Hackney at approximately 1:30 a.m. Emergency services were called to the scene, and the woman was rushed to the hospital with what doctors described as life-changing injuries. Medical staff are continuing to assess the extent of the burns to her face and upper body.

Detectives investigating the attack believe it was a targeted assault rather than a random act of violence. Officers are reviewing CCTV footage from the area and have appealed to witnesses to come forward. While no arrests have yet been made, a police spokesperson confirmed that investigators are pursuing what they described as “strong leads.” Forensic teams have also been deployed to collect evidence at the scene.

Superintendent James Conway of the Met Police condemned the attack as “a shocking and deliberate act of violence that has left a young woman with devastating injuries.” He added that officers were working “around the clock” to bring those responsible to justice and reassured residents that additional patrols would be carried out in Hackney in the coming days.

The attack has prompted strong condemnation from community leaders and campaigners. Local councillors described the assault as “a brutal and cowardly act” that had spread fear across the neighbourhood. Charities and anti-violence groups renewed calls for tighter regulation of corrosive substances, warning that acid attacks continue to pose a significant threat in the capital.

Acid attacks have been a recurring issue in London over the past decade, often leaving victims with severe physical and psychological scars. Although the number of incidents has fallen since stricter sales controls were introduced in 2018, campaigners argue that loopholes remain. Under current law, it is illegal for retailers to sell strong corrosive substances to anyone under the age of 18, and carrying acid in public without a lawful excuse can result in a prison sentence. However, critics say enforcement is inconsistent and that substances remain too easy to obtain.

Katie Piper, a prominent campaigner and survivor of an acid attack, issued a statement urging the government to strengthen protections for vulnerable groups. “Every attack of this nature is preventable,” she said. “We must ensure that corrosive substances are treated with the same seriousness as knives and firearms.”

The case has also sparked broader concerns about violence against women in London. Advocacy groups highlighted the disproportionate impact such attacks have on female victims, often leaving them with permanent disfigurement and long-term trauma. “This is not only an attack on one woman, it is an attack that sends shockwaves through communities,” said a spokesperson for Women’s Aid.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer’s government has faced increasing pressure to expand legislation addressing violence involving corrosive substances. Home Office officials have previously said that measures are under review, though no new policies have yet been announced.

For now, the investigation remains the priority. Police have appealed to anyone with information, including drivers with dashcam footage from the area around Hackney at the time of the attack, to come forward. Officers have assured the public that they are determined to identify and arrest the suspect swiftly.

As the victim recovers in the hospital, the incident has become another flashpoint in the national debate over violent crime in the capital. Campaigners insist that without stronger restrictions and harsher penalties, acid attacks will continue to haunt London despite previous attempts at reform.